

The Improvement of Down Syndrome Children's Independency Through Vocational Skill Training

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Abstract: This research aimed to find out the down syndrome children's independency using vocational skill training. The research method employed was classroom action research (CAR). The subjects of research were four children with down syndrome. Techniques of collecting data used were a documentation study, test, and observation. The data analyzed by an interactive model by comparing prior data before and after the action through 2 cycles. The result showed that the mean score of down syndrome children independency increased. The implementation of the vocational skill training in local content subject material successfully improved the down syndrome independency.

Keywords: vocational skill training, independency, down syndrome

Education is a very important to all aspects of human life, requiring the human being to think. Special education is the form of educational service dealing with the students with special needs, including those with Down syndrome. Special education consciously attempts continuously to improve education as well as possible. One of education service given to the children in academic area is independency lesson.

Gunarhadi (2005) states that the children with mild down syndrome or the educable children are those likely acquiring education in independency, writing, and counting fields at certain grade at special school. For the Down syndrome children, independency is the most important thing to their life in the future. Without independency, they will not develop maximally.

The development of syndrome down children is varying, including physical, cognitive, and psychosocial aspects. Gunarhadi (2005) states that many factors affect those development: (1) internal factor including talent, hereditary characteristic, motivation, and instinct, (2) external factor including food, climate, culture, economy, position of children within the family, and (3) general factor including intelligence, sex, health and race. Just like other normal children, the development of children with special needs is affected by many factors. They are the position of children in the family, how the family treats the children, how the parents pay attention to their development, and the extent to which parents attempt to find knowledge related to their children development. Independency is one of parents' pattern in taking care of children encouraging

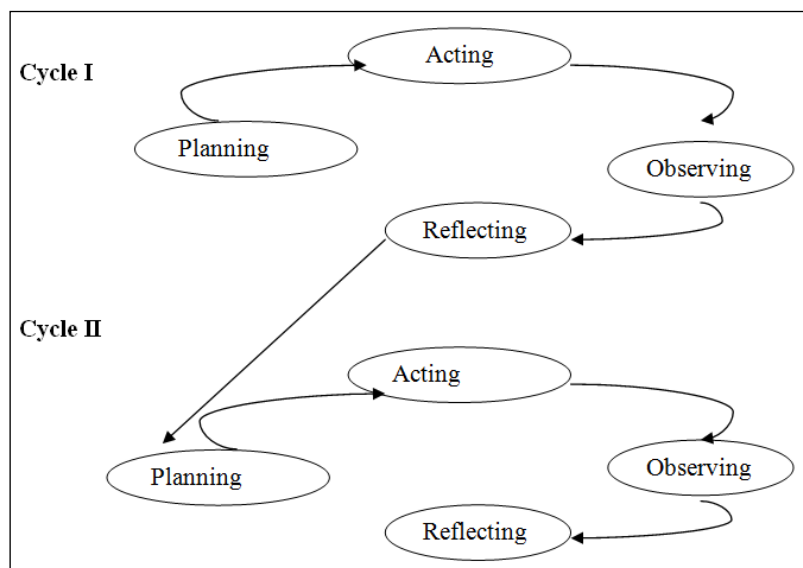
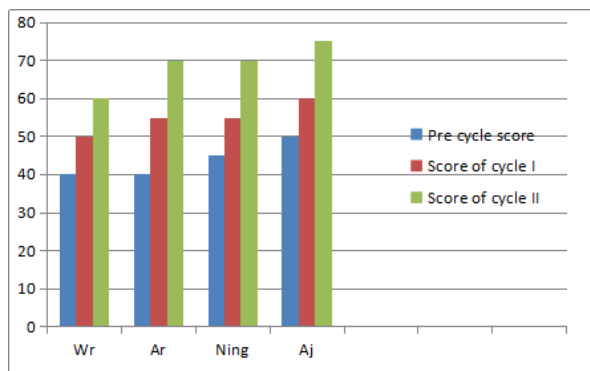
them to be independent, but still putting limits and controlling their action. Parents support everything the children do.

Independency is the objective of learning for Down syndrome children. Children are expected to fulfill all of their need without others' help. Recalling that childhood and adolescence are the important periods in the independency development process, the understanding and the opportunity the parents give to their children in improving independency are very important. Family is the main and first pillar in creating the independent children. To help the children with Down syndrome deal with independency difficulty, vocational skill training is conducted.

METHOD

This research was taken place in SLB Putra Harapan Gondang Sragen, Central Java, Indonesia. The research was conducted in the academic year of 2016/2017 from November 2016 to February 2017.

This study was a classroom action research (CAR) design. Classroom action research, according to El Wardani, *et al* (2006), is an action research conducted in the classroom. CAR was the one conducted by teacher him/her self or in collaboration involving author, teachers, children or other employees of school aiming to improve the system and the teacher's performance in the attempt of improving the quality of children independency, both process and product. In this research, the vocational skill training was employed to find out whether or not there is the increase in the children's independency product (output).

Figure 1. Research Procedure**Figure 2. the comparison of Independency Score of Children with Down syndrome between cycles****Table 1. score list between cycles for the 2nd graders**

No	Name	Score		
		Prior Condition	Cycle I	Cycle II
1	Woro	40	50	60
2	Arga	40	55	70
3	Ningsih	45	55	70
4	Ajib	50	60	75
Total		180	230	240
Mean Class		43,75	57,50	70.00

The material of children independency is the daily life skills the children need in their life. This research was conducted in 4 stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

The strategy used in this study was classroom action research. This research aimed to describe and to explain the reality in the field through the author's observation. In this case, the object observed is the children's independency activity before and after the action has been given using vocational skill training.

The subject of research consisted of teachers and children with Down syndrome in SLB Putra Harapan Gondang Sragen in the school year of 2016/2017. The children studied consisted of 4 children: 2 boys and 1 girl. The object of research was the independency activity of children with Down syndrome in SLB Putra Harapan Gondang Sragen in the school year of 2016/2017.

The classroom action research (CAR) conducted can be illustrated in the figure 1.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The chart from Figure 2 above shows the comparison of Independency Score of Children with Down syndrome between cycles. Considering the data of pre-cycle product for the children before the action was taken, it can be found that the mean score of children's independency is 43.73; this figure increased to 57.50 in cycle I and 70.00 in cycle II. In the material of vocational skill training, it can be found that there is an increase of independency activeness and the children's independency output (product). Thus, the implementation of independency improvement up to cycle II has been considered as good, because the children's understanding on the completion of vocational skill activity has indicates some improvement.

Discussion

The result of independency in cycles I and II shows that the vocational skill training can improve the children's concentration and memory concerning the routine activity so that the children's independency output can improve. The improvement of concentration and memory using vocational skill training runs sustainably both in school and at home; it is in line with Bratanata (1999) stating that the main objective of learning this vocational skill training is

to stimulate the brain function thereby developing and achieving the optimum function, and improving speed, appropriateness, and precision in thinking, and practicing concentration and memory. Meanwhile, the improvement of children's independency output is compensated with the improvement of children's attitude in the classroom. The result of observation shows the children's activity during independency process in cycles I and II also improves. The improvement of independency output of children with Down syndrome in SLB Putra Harapan Gondang Sragen can be seen in the elaboration above. The improvement of independency is affected by the utilization of vocational skill training and independency process. The increase in percentage affective score shown by children with Down syndrome in cycles I and II indicates the big interest in independency using vocational skill training. Interest, according to Hurlock (2012), is an individual's wish to pay attention to certain object, followed with the pleasure to satisfy the need. Nevertheless, every vocational skill training method used of course has both strength and weakness.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Considering the result of classroom action research conducted in two cycles by applying the vocational skill training instrument in the children with down syndrome in SLB Putra Harapan Gondang Sragen in the school year of 2016/2017, it can be concluded that the independency of children with Down syndrome can be improved through vocational skill training. The independency has achieved the independency passing classically.

Suggestion

The theoretical implication of current research shows that independency by applying vocational skill training can improve the independency ability of children with down syndrome in local content material of skill. In presenting the learning material,

teacher should be able to choose the appropriate independency method to facilitate the children to master the material well in independency. In this independency material, the children can do experiment independently so that they can understand easily and then memorize the material without compulsion and suppression from parents and teacher. This result of the research can be used as the input for the teacher to improve the appropriate independency strategy and method thereby improving the quality of teaching independency process in relation to the objective to be achieved by the students.

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